

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 03848 272107Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1227

S E C R E T BOGOTA 3848

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM CHARGE

DEPT PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR BREZINSKI

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (MRS. CARTER) CO

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VISIT OF MRS. CARTER

REF: STATE 94655

1. I RECOMMEND A VISIT BY MRS. CARTER TO THE GOLD MUSEUM IN BOGOTA, WHICH HOUSES A UNIQUE COLLECTION OF PRE-COLOMBIAN GOLD ARTIFACTS OF WHICH COLOMBIANS ARE JUSTLY PROOUD. MUSEUM IS IN CENTER OF CITY ABOUT 20 MINUTES DRIVE FROM RESIDENCE AND 10 MINUTES FROM CHANCERY. COLLECTION IS COLOMBIA'S CHIEF ARTISTIC AND HISTORICAL ATTRACTION. VISIT WOULD TAKE 45 MINUTES TO 1 HOUR.

2. WOULD ALSO SUGGEST VISIT TO VILLAGE OF GUATAVITA WHICH IS ONE AND ONEHALF HOUR DRIVE FROM RESIDENCE THROUGH COUNTRYSIDE WHICH WOULD GIVE MRS. CARTER AN INTERESTING AND ATTRACTIVE SAMPLING OF COLOMBIAN RURAL AREAS. (SECRETARY KISSINGER VISITED GUATAVITA DURING HIS STOP-OVER IN COLOMBIAN LAST YEAR.) VILLAGE, WHICH IS IN A SCENIC LOCATION, WAS BUILT A FEW YEARS AGO ON THE BASIS OF A UNIFIED DESIGN WHICH ATTRACTIVELY BLENDS MODERN AND
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COLONIAL STYLES IT REPLACED A VILLAGE THAT WAS SUBMERGED IN CONNECTION

WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A LARGE RESERVOIR. VILLAGE AUTHORITIES WOULD LIKELY TURN-OUT THEIR SCHOOL-CHILDREN TO GREET MRS. CARTER.

3. IF TIME PERMITS, WOULD ALSO BE POSSIBLE FOR MRS. CARTER TO VISIT A CHILDREN'S HOME IN BOGOTA TO GET AN IDEA OF LOCAL

SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS. COLOMBIANS, HOWEVER, ARE SENSITIVE TO THEIR RELATIVE BACKWARDNESS IN SUCH ENTERPRISES SO I WOULD NOT STRONGLY RECOMMEND THIS THOUGH SUCH A VISIT COULD BE READILY ARRANGED IF MRS. CARTER WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN IT.

4. ASSUMING THAT PRESIDENT LOPEZ GIVES A LUNCH (OR DINNER) IN MRS. CARTER'S HONOR, I WOULD RECOMMEND THAT SHE RECIPROCATE BY GIVING A LUNCHEON FOR MRS. LOPEZ AT THE RESIDENCE AT WHICH WE WOULD SUGGEST INCLUDING A REPRESENTATIVE GROUP OF COLOMBIANS AND AMERICANS. THE REMAINING MEAL, EITHER A LUNCH OR A DINNER DEPENDING ON PRESIDENT LOPEZ' PLANS, COULD EITHER TAKE PLACE AT A RESTAURANT WITH LOCAL COLOR OR AT THE RESIDENCE AS AN EMBASSY FAMILY MEAL.

5. I EXPECT THAT MEETING WITH PRESIDENT WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE AFTERNOON, POSSIBLY FOLLOWING A LUNCHEON FOR MRS. CARTER. THUS, TENTATIVE SCHEDULE WOULD LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS:

TUESDAY MAY 31: ARRIVAL IN LATE MORNING, TRANSFER TO RESIDENCE.

1:00 PM LUNCHEON AT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE FOLLOWED BY TALKS WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ

4:00 PM VISIT TO GOLD MUSEUM
EVENING: DINNER AT RESTAURANT OR RESIDENCE

WEDNESDAY JUNE 1:

8:30 - 12:30 VISIT TO GUATAVITA

1:00 PM LUNCH AT RESIDENCE IN HONOR OF MRS. LOPEZ

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AFTERNOON: DEPARTURE FROM BOGOTA

6. THE PRESIDENT IS NATURALLY ANXIOUS TO KNOW WHETHER MRS. CARTER'S PLANS CAN BE CONSIDERED FIRM SO THAT APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE. I SHOULD POINT OUT THAT LOPEZ IS CURRENTLY FACED WITH SERIOUS DOMESTIC POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, INCLUDING ALLEGATIONS OF IMPROPRIETY AND CORRUPTION AIMED AT TWO OF HIS SONS. HE IS REACTING VIGOROUSLY AND IN SOME CASES VISCERALLY TO THESE CHALLENGES. HE HAS NEVER BEEN A WARM OR PARTICULARLY CHARMING PERSON TO ANY BUT A VERY SMALL CIRCLE OF INTIMATE FRIENDS AND RECENT FOREIGN VISITORS HAVE SOMETIMES FOUND HIM PROOCCUPIED, SOMEWHAT APATHETIC AND TOUCHY. CONVERSATIONS WITH HIM CAN THUS BE FAIRLY BUMPY AND HIS COMMAND OF ENGLISH BECOMES LESS FIRM UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Subject: POSSIBLE VISIT OF MRS CARTER
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Review Markings:
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